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# A PLEA FOR PURE CHURCH MUSIC

By N. LINDSAY NORDEN

**I**T may seem, perhaps, paradoxical to plead for church music in churches, but so very far from the essence and spirit of true ecclesiastical music has church music of to-day digressed, it is, indeed, an exception to find unquestionable religious music in a church service. Music used in the church of to-day differs but little from that of the concert-hall or the opera. There appears to be prevalent an almost uniform idea that music sung in churches must be secular in spirit in order to interest congregations. Apparently, many choirmasters consider that they are doing their best to please the public, when they intentionally include cheap, sentimental music on their programs and exclude examples of the best religious compositions. There is but one place in which religious music may be satisfactorily performed—and that is in the church. Secular music is acceptable with equal interest in the theatre, the home, the restaurant, the concert-hall, or the opera. The field of religious music is abundant with impressive works. Why these should be passed over for a type of music which does not, and cannot ever be properly associated with the ritual of the church, is difficult to explain upon any basis. In general, church standards are not nearly so high as those prevailing in the secular field.

Religious music was the progenitor of all modern music, and had not the early church carefully fostered the art, it is doubtful to just what degree it might have developed. The music of Palestrina, Vittoria, Praetorius, Gabrieli, Orlando di Lasso, Bach, Arcadelt, and many other composers, both ancient and modern, is neglected in the church of to-day. Its performance is abandoned to the concert-hall, where it is lamentably out of place. Rarely does a Sunday pass by, however, but that some distorted selection from the works of Richard Wagner, or some other operatic composer, is rendered, with a religious text written in. The causes of this deplorable situation are numerous; reference is here made to but a few of the important ones.

The prime consideration, it would appear, is the type of musician engaged in the regular direction of church music. Obviously, good music cannot be understood by an undeveloped

musician, nor is such a person capable of using intelligent judgment in selecting such music for performance. The general attitude of the young musician toward the field of church music may be summed up in the word "organ." The majority of church music schools apparently make this their chief attraction. Entering the field through a study of this instrument, perhaps with no other musical training worthy of mention, and having secured some kind of a position, the student concentrates his entire activities upon furthering his ability as a performer. For a position he is selected by a "music committee," which always judges a choirmaster upon his ability as an organist! And music committees, it is to be regretted, are generally composed of men who have no appreciation of church music or ecclesiastical style. Notwithstanding these vital facts, their judgments are final in most matters appertaining to the musical department of the church. The inevitable result is that the committee selects a fine technician and entrusts him with the destinies of the music of that church. Thus, slowly but surely, the church drifts further away from true church music, and the secular spirit dominates. Concert organ playing attempts to usurp the rightful place of religious music—but without success.

Any musician who approaches work in church music more or less along the lines briefly described above, is not prepared to accomplish much of value, nor will his name find its way into the musical histories of the country. It is to be acknowledged that all of our Western churches have organs, good or bad, (more often the latter!), and it further appears that they must be played every Sunday. In truth, however, this is but the smallest part of church music, and it cannot be denied that a great advance in ecclesiastical music would be made if all the church organs in the country could be destroyed! Vocal music was the first music in the history of man. It will always be the truest and most genuine form of musical expression, and will be ever inseparable from religious ritual. While organ music has, on the whole, greatly disfigured the music of the church, it will never be able to completely supplant it. The moving picture houses are fast catching up with the churches in respect to being equipped with large fine organs, and, on the whole, one hears better performing in the former, for here the organist generally possesses a fine technique. An organ is not a church instrument by virtue of any inherent qualities, nor was it introduced in churches until a comparatively late century, at which time ecclesiastical music had already attained to a very high plane. When the instrument

was introduced it aroused great opposition both in Europe and in this country. As a solo instrument it has unquestionable, but nevertheless limited, value, but it merely mocks a thoroughly well trained choir, and at best only detracts from the results of their efforts.

A musician who undertakes to do serious work in church music must make a comprehensive study of the music of the early church, antedating the introduction of instrumental accompaniment. Such a study must include the early music of all nations. Further, it is essential that he possess a thorough general education, and a well developed appreciation of activity in other fields of musical endeavor—the orchestra, chamber music, the opera, etc. The prerequisites for a director in the secular field are fairly well established, but in the church field there are practically *none*. The laxest methods prevail, and the church entrusts her music to any sort of an individual who is able to play the organ. The requirements here should be much more severe; and should be adhered to in the strictest sense. Genuine religious music is neither rendered, understood, nor fostered by the majority of church directors of to-day. Its place is filled by secular compositions. Perhaps it would be a wise plan to establish a committee of censors for each denomination. Such a committee might be composed of musicians whose standards were unquestionable. They would pass upon selections worthy of being sung in churches of that denomination. By this process it would be a simple matter to dispose of dross. Such a plan would be a decided step in advance.

The boy choir, as maintained in this country at least, is responsible for a good percentage of the degeneration of church music. Choirmasters instructing boys have so many difficulties with which to cope, that they naturally seek easy, so-called “popular” anthems, generally very rhythmical in character. As boy choirs are conducted here, such music is almost a necessity, for, with boys leaving constantly, it is nigh impossible to develop a good style. Further, the difficulty of obtaining “male altos” (who “sing” falsetto), and the expense of remunerating such persons, results in a choir being able to possess only a very limited number of altos—perhaps only two or three. There are many choirs composed of forty or fifty singers, which possess only two altos. Such an equipment necessarily limits the style and difficulty of the music presented. Clearly, rendition of true church music in such cases is nigh impossible, and, if attempted, would be badly lacking in the alto voice. Eight, or ten part

vocal writing, which is choral music at its best, would be further removed from adequate presentation. So, again, church standards suffer, and the church stands in her own light in permitting such hopeless institutions.

There is no question amongst serious minded musicians that a cappella rendition is the great traditional ideal in church music. Critics, musicians, and clergymen alike have expressed themselves definitely on this point. From the earliest days, long before the introduction of instruments in churches, down to the present time, composers have always fostered the true church style. For, to some degree, at least, all of the master musicians have been interested in adding to the literature of so ancient an institution. Palestrina, Bach, Sweelink, Kastalsky, Cornelius, Mendelssohn, Verdi, Bortnyansky, Rimsky-Korsakoff, Tschai-kowsky, Gounod, Gretchaninoff, as well as many other composers, have deemed the field of church music worthy of their most serious efforts.

A well trained chorus is a complete musical unit, and requires no more support or accompaniment than does a symphony orchestra or a band. It interprets to a fuller degree the emotions of the human mind in its worshipful, sorrowful, joyful or penitent attitude, for there is less taint of mechanical accessories than in any other musical production. A great choir is fully as inspiring and uplifting as is a fine orchestra, and to many individuals it is even a finer and more expressive instrument.

The a cappella music of Gounod, Stainer, Sullivan, Barnby and Mendelssohn is, on the whole, similar in style, for these men did not fully comprehend the possibilities and scope of this style. Writing for an unaccompanied choir is something more than merely building up eight part chords, with correct voice leading. It cannot be denied that some of Gounod's church music is well written, but, nevertheless, it lacks genuine churchly style. The English school, in general, is painfully academic, and uninspired. The music of the early church, however, is rich in splendid works, to which only one modern school may be compared—that of the Russian. The early church music was naturally limited in expression and style, while the Russian school has had the advantage of developing under much more favorable conditions. The Russian composers, brought up entirely upon the a cappella style in the vocal field, have for centuries thought and composed in terms of pure vocal music, and *not* in terms of a keyboard. This school contains compositions of every conceivable type—compositions which never fail to arouse enthusiasm on account of the endless

combination of voices, parts, solos, cadences, harmonies and the like. Some are distinctly simple, being written in one key, perhaps for pages, but so skilfully written that one's interest never wanes. Others are more modern, and hence correspondingly difficult. Again, some are written in ten or twelve voice parts, while others are mystic in the unusual use of unisons and open fifths. But all are unquestionably examples of legitimate church music.

There is something grander and more compelling in pure choral renditions than there is in mixed choral and instrumental rendition, for in the former instance we hear the pure untempered harmonies, which cannot be produced by any other musical unit. Choirs have come to depend upon instrumental support for pitch and correct performance. There are very few choirs which at the present time could perfectly render a complete service without instrumental support. Nothing is conscientious effort; all is mere suggestion!

There are, however, several choirs which of late have been giving evidence of the value and inspiration of a cappella singing, thereby proving the uselessness of accompaniment. It is evident that in training a choir for such work more rehearsals and more intense rehearsing are essential to success. It is an exacting process, which cannot be carried out indifferently. But when a chorus has reached the happy stage where they are conscious of their ability, great interest develops. In other words, such music gives a chance for individual responsibility, and it is this desire for individual responsibility which causes singers to seek solo positions. In this case all are soloists, for all have the same great responsibility. An enthusiastic beginning is the first prerequisite for success.

Unaccompanied singing is a measure of musical ability and enthusiasm, and hence is of great value to the singer. It requires, however, approximately one year of conscientious training to produce a singer capable of participating in a cappella work. Singers have grown so accustomed to singing against an instrument in tempered intonation that they find themselves in great difficulties when they attempt pure vocal music. Such music is always sung in just, or true intonation, if rendered by choristers sufficiently trained in a cappella singing. Those whose ears have been corrupted find themselves at a loss in unaccompanied work. Their natural musical instinct leads them to sing just intervals, but their continued association with a tempered organ or a piano counteracts that. The result is singing horribly out of tune. A

choir which rehearses and performs entirely a cappella is a joy to hear—so luscious and pure are the harmonies created by their voices. Helmholtz, the great authority on the science of music, writes:

In singing, the pitch can be made most easily and perfectly to follow the wishes of a fine musical ear. Hence, all music began with singing; and singing will always remain the true and natural school of all music. The only intervals which singers can strike with certainty and perfection are such as they can comprehend with certainty and perfection, and what the singer easily and naturally sings the hearer will also easily and naturally understand.

But when are our singers to learn just intonation and make their ears sensitive for perfect chords? They are from the first taught to sing to the equally-tempered pianoforte. If a major chord is struck as an accompaniment, they may sing a perfect consonance with its root, its Fifth, or its Third. This gives them about the fifth part of a Semitone for their voices to choose from without decidedly singing out of harmony, and even if they sing a little sharper than consonance with the sharp Third requires, or a little flatter than consonance with the flat Fifth requires, the harmoniousness of the chord will not be really much more damaged. The singer who practices to a tempered instrument has no principle at all for exactly and certainly determining the pitch of his voice.

On the other hand, we often hear four musical amateurs who have practised much together singing quartettes in perfectly just intonation. Indeed, my own experience leads me almost to affirm that quartettes are more frequently heard with just intonation when sung by young men who scarcely sing anything else, and often and regularly practice them, than when sung by instructed solo singers who are accustomed to the accompaniment of the pianoforte or orchestra. But correct intonation in singing even by a weak and unpractised voice, always sounds agreeable, whereas the richest and most practised voice offends the hearer when it sings false or sharpens. . . .

The Tonic-sol-faists . . . sing by natural, and not by tempered intervals. When their choirs are accompanied by a tempered organ, there are marked differences and disturbances, whereas they are in perfect unison with General Thompson's Enharmonic Organ (an instrument in just intonation—N. L. N.) . . . I think no doubt can remain, if any doubt ever existed, that the intervals . . . called natural, are really natural for uncorrupted ears; that moreover the deviations of tempered intonation are really perceptible and unpleasant to uncorrupted ears; and, lastly, that notwithstanding the delicate distinctions in particular intervals, correct singing by natural intervals is much easier than singing in tempered intonation.

Alexander J. Ellis, translator of the Helmholtz book, says:

On December 27, 1869, at a meeting of the Tonic-sol-fa College, I had an unusual opportunity of contrasting the effect of just and tempered intonation in the singing of the same choir. It was a choir of about

sixty mixed voices, which had gained the prize at the International Exhibition at Paris in 1867, and had been kept well together ever since. After singing some pieces without accompaniment, and hence in the just intonation to which the singers had been trained, and with the most delightful effect of harmony, they sang a piece with a pianoforte accompaniment. Of course, the pianoforte itself was inaudible among the mass of sound produced by sixty voices. But it had the effect of perverting their intonation, and the whole charm of the singing was at once destroyed. There was nothing left but the everyday singing of an ordinary choir. The disillusion was complete and the effect most unsatisfactory as a conclusion.

The best opportunity in this country of hearing pure vocal music is offered by the singing of the now famous Choir of the Russian Cathedral of St. Nicholas, in New York City. This choir rehearses and performs entirely unsupported by an instrument. This is partly the reason that their singing seems to possess a certain charm which has not been felt here before. The conditions are decidedly against this ideal in the majority of cases, but, nevertheless, a few other choruses which receive a goodly amount of a cappella training, approximate the effects which the Russians produce. The reason that certain compositions sound so well when the Russian Choir sings them, and so uninteresting and lifeless when other choral bodies attempt them, lies in the fact that both major and minor chords in just intonation are very different from those in tempered intonation. This difference is not so marked in piano music, where there is but little *sostenuto*, but in choral music, which, in the main, consists of sustained harmonies, it is very marked. The author has an organ, on which it is possible to play in just intonation in major and minor. The effect of the chords played upon this instrument is exactly the same as the effect of the chords sung by the Russian Choir. It is a great satisfaction to play on this instrument, and if chords are played on a well-tuned piano immediately after playing the organ, they sound horribly false and out of tune.

Helmholtz states:

The justly intoned chords, in favorable positions . . . possess a full and, as it were, saturated harmoniousness; they flow on with a full stream, calm and smooth, without tremor or beat. Equally tempered, or Pythagorean chords, beside them sound rough, dull, trembling, restless. The difference is so marked that everyone, whether he is musically cultivated or not, observes it at once. Chords of the dominant seventh in just intonation have nearly the same degree of roughness as a common major chord of the same pitch in tempered intonation. The difference between natural and tempered intonation is greatest and most unpleasant in the higher octaves of the scale, because here the false combinational



tones of the tempered intonation are more observable, and the number of beats for equal differences in pitch becomes larger, and hence the roughness greater. . . . A second circumstance of essential importance is, that the differences of effect between major and minor chords, between different inversions and positions of chords of the same kind, and between consonances and dissonances are much more decided and conspicuous, than in equal temperament. Hence modulations become much more expressive. Many fine distinctions are sensible, which otherwise almost disappear, as, for instance, those which depend on the different inversions and positions of chords, while, on the other hand, the intensity of the harsher dissonances is much increased by their contrast with perfect chords. The chord of the diminished seventh, which is so much used in modern music, borders on the insupportable, when the other chords are tuned justly.

This explains to some degree the fact that many compositions intended for a cappella performance when played upon the piano sound "dry" and uninteresting. There has always been a feeling among musicians that a composition is "choral" if it has a decided feeling for tonality, and those modulations which may occur are plain and obvious. Queer and obscure modulations are not adapted for choral music. Modern French choral music is always sung lamentably out of tune, for the singers cannot appreciate altered harmonies and unrelated modulations. Such music in essence is instrumental and should not be assigned to singers for performance.

If studied from the point of choral style, and not from the point of keyboard effect, the Russian school and much of the early church music is wonderful and inspiring. It is to be remembered, too, that much of the early music was written before tempered intonation was brought forward, and consequently singers performing the same sang "by ear," that is, in the natural, untempered intonation. Such music attempted by singers whose ears have become accustomed to tempered intervals does not sound as intended. To observe what splendid choral effects are possible under these restrictions, it would be wise to examine Rachmaninoff's "Cherubim Song," where for some dozen pages there is no modulation, and only one passing accidental in the whole piece! "The Day of Judgment," an extremely dramatic piece, is written (in eight pages) in F minor, B flat minor and E flat minor, ending in F minor. All the modulations are clear and uninvolved. The anthem "From My Youth" by Kastalsky begins in D minor, modulates to C major, and ends in D major, without difficult modulations. Many others might be mentioned in a similar way. Where there is any amount of modulating it

is developed logically, for distant modulations are not, and should not be used for choral music. These facts may be of interest to those who have not really known music of the a cappella style as it is, and whose interest in it has consisted wholly in playing it over on the piano, organ, or hearing it attempted by singers totally unable to sing pure harmonies. The matter is of the utmost importance to all choral directors, and worthy of their most serious attention and study. At present the matter is practically neglected from the intellectual side—all being relegated to chance and pure instinct. Helmholtz again states:

. . . . . the human voice has a peculiar advantage over the organ and all other musical instruments in the execution of polyphonic music. The words, which are sung, connect the notes belonging to each part and form a clue which really guides the hearer to discover and pursue the related parts of the whole body of sound. Hence polyphonic music and the whole modern system of harmony was first developed on the human voice. Indeed, nothing can exceed the musical effect of well harmonized part-music perfectly executed in just intonation by practised voices. . . . . It is only such singers as have a delicate musical feeling of their own who find out the correct result, which is no longer taught them.

It is impossible to pass by this most important phase of choral music without quoting from one or two other writers of authority. J. A. Fuller-Maitland writes in this wise:

. . . . . but on instruments or voices that are capable of performing in Just Intonation, the beauty of an untempered chord is unmistakable. The instruments of the violin family, on which the notes are not fixed, can be played in Just Intonation and choirs that are in the habit of practising without the aid of keyboard instruments can be made to realize the difference and to make the intervals really accurate. Occasionally solo singers are to be found who can adapt their voices to give the correct intervals, but as a matter of course, the frequent modulations of modern music, causing delicate adjustment of pitch to be made at every moment, make it more and more difficult to realize Just Intonation.

R. B. Litchfield, writing on the Tonic-sol-fa system, says:

The great truths of tonic relationship and Just Intonation which are taught almost automatically by the Tonic-sol-fa system make it an invaluable stepping-stone to the staff notation. . . . .

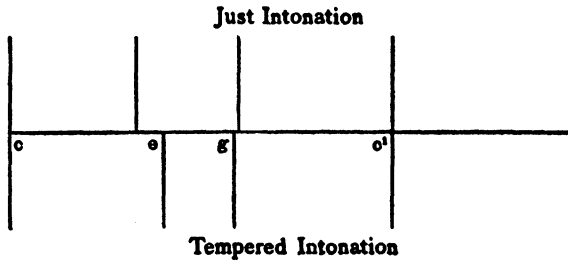
William Pole, in "The Philosophy of Music," states:

The most important errors are those of the thirds, which are considerably wrong, and it is undoubtedly the fact that the major third is

an interval to which, from the prominent place in the major triad (the chord of nature) the ear is peculiarly sensitive. On the pianoforte this is not of so much consequence, but on the organ and harmonium (also in vocal ensemble, N. L. N.) where tones are sustained or moderately sensitive the ear finds the equally tempered major third harsh and disagreeable . . . . Who would force on us the equal temperament in cases where perfect intonation can be obtained just as easily, namely, as in stringed instruments or pure vocal music? It is only on keyed instruments having a limited number of fixed tones that the difficulties of imperfect intonation arise; with the voice and the violin tribe there are no such difficulties, and hence well-trained singers or good violin players would, when guided by their ears, naturally keep their harmonies in tune. To prevent them from doing this and to try and make them conform to the equal temperament is an offence against musical perception unworthy of a true musician. Whatever may be said in favor of the utility of the equal duodecimal division of the scale, no one with any knowledge of harmony can fail to perceive that the  $\flat$  sharp third is musically unnatural and untrue and it ought not to be tolerated in sustained tones, if the natural and true effect can be got. It is the possibility of getting this which gives such an inexpressible charm to stringed and vocal harmony when unaccompanied by the intractable keyed instruments.

Henry W. Poole, in a paper entitled "Essay on Perfect Intonation and the Enharmonic Organ," writes:

Church music, perhaps more than any other, depends for its excellence almost entirely upon its harmony. From church music are necessarily excluded many qualities which add much interest and character to other kinds of music. As its movement is slow and regular, any excellence or defect in its harmony is most apparent. The instrument which has long been used, and is best adapted as a guide and accompanist to voices in church music, is the organ. For this purpose it is the instrument of all instruments, as its derivation (*Tò òrganon*) also signifies. It is superior to all others in the volume of sound and the number of parts which can be brought under the control of a single player. When played with the choir the defects of the organ are most perceptible. As the organ usually plays the same parts which the choir sing, the singers must temper exactly like the organ—which probably no choir was ever trained to do accurately—or there will be a continued want of agreement between them. A perfect major third a child who has had no musical instruction will strike most readily, and almost unconsciously, for it is in the simple ratio of 4:5, and the ear instantly detects the coincidence of the vibrations; but a tempered major third, two-thirds of a comma sharp, he knows nothing about; it requires the skill of a scientific and well-drilled musician to give it correctly. If the singers could learn to temper with the organ, it would be at the sacrifice of that pure harmony which they would make if they sang in tune without tempered accompaniment. The ordinary agreement, (or rather disagreement), between a choir and organ accompaniment, can be illustrated to the eye by the following example:



We will suppose that an organ, tuned in the equal temperament, is accompanying a choir, when it is singing the common chord of C.

The key-note C will, of course, be the same in the organ and the choir. The fifth, G, of the organ will be slightly, but perceptibly, flat, viz., one-twelfth of a comma. The third, E, of the organ will be very discordant with the choir, being two-thirds of a comma sharp. If B $\flat$  in the chord of the seventh be added, the discord will be much greater than in either the fifth or the third; the organ being a comma and a quarter too sharp. Any one who will notice the singing of a good quartette with a tempered organ, may perceive the variation and discord of the organ upon these thirds and sevenths, particularly the last. For this reason these notes are oftentimes omitted, as in chants, to the great improvement in the general effect. Good natural singers, who give their thirds and sevenths correctly, on the first singing with an organ, have been accused by organists and conductors ignorant of the matter, of singing flat, because by temperament these notes on the organ were too sharp.

To perform a cappella singing well a choir must be arranged in one solid group. The introduction of the boy choir and with that the moving of the choir into the chancel, have placed great difficulties in the way of certain musical results. In large choirs, where there are sufficient singers to place a complete choir on both sides of the chancel, the division is not so troublesome. But in the average church, where there are from twenty-five to thirty singers, a serious difficulty is met with at once. If it is not possible to place a choir at the back of the church, they should be placed to one side, where they may be directed invisible to the congregation. It is absurd to place a director with his back to his choir, and assign to him the task of performing on an instrument, simultaneous with directing. How ridiculous it would appear to so place an orchestral director, and of the two the church director probably has the more difficult task. If an organ *must* sometimes be played when the choir sings, at least two individuals should be in charge, one of the choir and the other of the organ.

Unless carried on under unusual and exceptional conditions, congregational singing is a pronounced failure, in Protestant

churches at least. The denominational churches have made a little more progress with it, but it is not very valuable as a source of inspiration or uplift. Perhaps the idea is a noble one, but the average individual in this country has given little or no time to vocal music, and is not, therefore, in a position to do much singing publicly. He is too embarrassed, especially in the prevalent small congregations of to-day, to join in the singing. Of course, there are times when under the influence of some unusual event, mass singing is inspiring and uplifting. Such an atmosphere, however, is not to be found in regular Sunday church service. To those who worship in our churches, however, a great message may be brought by a group of people especially trained in the art of sacred music. Further, the inspiration which comes from hearing such music is infinitely greater than that which comes from weak individual participation in some "familiar tune." The people who attend the inspiring services in the Russian Cathedral of St. Nicholas in New York City come away deeply moved by the high spiritual qualities of the music, and the manner in which it is sung. Yet the congregation in this Cathedral never join in any musical part of the service and are silent throughout the whole time, only crossing themselves reverently at certain times. The effect of the whole service is without compare, for listening in silence, the music and the ritual is deeply impressed upon the mind of the worshipper. There is no service as rich in spiritual atmosphere, or as inspiring, as is a service in a Russian cathedral. Ritual demands the co-operation of highly artistic music, and anything less than this detracts, rather than adds, to the service. Many churches would accomplish more for their worshippers if they did away with their inferior choirs and insipid music, and read the service. People who have some musical appreciation—and very few people are without such appreciation to-day—are nearly driven from the church by such horrible musical attempts. No doubt, a great deal of pleasure is to be derived in small family circles through the singing of old familiar tunes, but such simple crude musical enjoyment is not adapted for public taste on an enlarged scale.

"The man of the street" is not at present interested in such problems as have been discussed here. The responsibility, therefore, rests upon the clergy and the musicians engaged in church work. If these officers would undertake to reform matters, the vast public could again be interested in religious music. The idea of giving the people what they want is acceptable, provided it is remembered that in the final issue the people want the best

—and only the best. The presence in New York of a number of symphony orchestras and several large choral bodies, as well as the fact that there are endless recitals of all kinds, and that several outside orchestras visit the city regularly, leads one to surmise that the interest in high-class music is tremendous. If the music of the church were of the same order there would surely be no lack of interest in it, for it would come to be a positive influence in the city. If the church does not see fit to foster its own music, who will? There is only one place for church music and that is in the church. Secular music is appropriate anywhere else. The idea of secularizing church music so as to make it “popular” is an unquestionable error. To be really popular means that it is appreciated by the great mass of the people. But such is not the case, and so in tolerating such music, the church is defeating her own purpose.

Perhaps the introduction of the spiritual music of the Russian church will be the means of salvation. At least, this music will have much to do with the uplifting of church music, in that it will guide religious music back to the path of legitimate development from which it has strayed. It is, indeed, to be regretted that matters have been allowed to become so hopelessly involved and degenerate, but it is to be hoped that the growing interest in the a cappella style is an indication that we are beginning to turn again to pure church music and higher standards. There is room for great development in this field of musical activity, for the problems of a cappella music have not been thoroughly worked out, and, on the whole, the matter is in a very elementary state. The problems presented are entirely different from those in any other field, and very different from those of choral music *with accompaniment*. It would, indeed, be a great inspiration to find some church devoting its choral energies to genuine church music, presented in the true church style. This is the only real function of a church choir, for upon what other grounds can it claim the right to exist?